



ABSTRACT

A SUMMARY OF THE 2010 ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (AIP) FOR OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA), NEW YORK STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY (CSE) AND EXPANDED IN-HOME SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY (EISEP) PROGRAMS AND OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING.

As the Area Agency on Aging, it is the responsibility of Erie County Senior Services to advocate on behalf of older persons by monitoring, evaluating, and commenting on policies, programs and community actions which affect seniors; by representing their interests and concerns to public officials and others; and by coordinating planning with other agencies and organizations to promote new and expanded benefits and opportunities.

This document represents a summary of the Erie County Department of Senior Services' objectives and activities for programs funded by the above referenced sources in addition to other available funding.

Erie County Senior Services remains dedicated to the provision of community-based programs and services that empower older adults to maximize their independence and optimize their well being.

A. ERIE COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES' PRIORITIES FOR 2010

- Strengthen and promote the Erie County NY Connects point of entry program designed to empower individuals of all ages and their families to make informed choices about their long term care options. This includes implementation of the 2009-11 Strategic Plan developed by the Long Term Care Council. The program will also identify and document gaps in the long term care service delivery system and develop recommendations to address both its inadequacies and inefficiencies.
- Advocate for the development of policies, resources, and programs that address the difficulties older adults experience in maintaining their homes and properties. Activities include the expansion of the Minor Residential Repair program to assist additional vulnerable seniors with critical home maintenance tasks.
- Increase the use of evidence-based disease and disability prevention programs for older people at the community level.
- Promote civic engagement activities that expand upon the opportunities that older adults have to utilize their talents and skills for their own personal development and the benefit of their communities.
- Empower older people to engage in activities that promote health, wellness, and healthy aging.

- Increase the public's awareness of elder mistreatment and the prevention of elder abuse.
- Educate and assist seniors and caregivers to become better prepared to deal with and survive an environmental or natural disaster or emergency.
- Identify means by which we can further address the transportation needs of seniors including participation in new federal and state initiatives such as "New Freedom", and to continue to participate in activities that support a more efficient, cost effective, mobility management system for seniors and adults with disabilities.
- Seek ways in which the Senior Advisory Board can actively support the mission of Senior Services and advocate on behalf of seniors in Erie County.
- Conduct a Lean Six Sigma project designed to identify and implement greater efficiencies in the processing of the contracts the Department of Senior Services has with agencies in the community.
- Promote the continuous improvement of Senior Services' management and service delivery capabilities through the implementation of various initiatives such as Lean Six Sigma, performance budgeting, and the further development of performance outcome measures.

B. ADVOCACY

Goal

To promote public policy, legislation, and private sector initiatives which address the needs of older adults.

Senior Services will advocate for additional resources and modifications in public policy to further promote the independence and optimum well-being for older adults. The following are some of the advocacy issues that will be addressed by Senior Services in 2010:

Federal

- Support federal legislation to implement Project 2020 which provides funding to the aging services network to promote consumer centered long term care strategies including chronic disease prevention and health promotion.
- Increase funding for Older Americans Act programs that expand home and community based services, transportation, legal assistance, evidenced-base health promotion, employment opportunities, caregiver support, and nutritional services.
- Pass the federal Elder Justice Act which creates a national adult protective services system.

- Improve the Medicare program including additional outreach to promote the low income subsidy under Part D, increases in income limits for the Medicare Savings Programs such as QI-1, and additional health screening and disease prevention efforts.
- Support efforts that seek to provide universal health care coverage for people age 60-64.

New York State

- In light of the current fiscal crisis that impacts New York State, we support exempting from further cuts the core state-funded home and community-based programs for the elderly with an emphasis on the Community Services for the Elderly (CSE), Expanded In-Home Services to the Elderly Program (EISEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) from further cuts.
- Advocate for increased training and education of medical and criminal justice professionals about aging related issues such as elder abuse.
- Support bipartisan efforts to lower the cost of prescription drugs through the use of the bulk purchasing power of the State.
- Support the work of the NYS Office for Aging and Department of Health on the restructuring of long term care and the development of public and private sector initiatives that address financing, choice, service delivery and labor force shortages.

C. PLANNING AND COORDINATION

Goal

To promote the development of a coordinated and comprehensive system of services for the elderly, especially those with greatest needs, so that they may remain in their own homes and participate fully in family and community life.

The following are some of the planning and coordination initiatives that will be implemented during 2010:

- Implement a pilot weekend meals program by delivering frozen meals to residents at three senior housing facilities.
- Work with the Health Department, Office for the Disabled, and other stakeholders on the development of a "Special Needs Registry" for the frail elderly and disabled for use during times of emergencies and disaster preparedness.
- In conjunction with the Erie County Department of Social Services, continue to implement Erie County NY Connects, the

local point of entry and trusted resource for free, unbiased information about long term care for persons of all ages in Erie County. This information will be provided using the core functions of information and assistance, screening, and public education via telephone, e-mail, website and personal access.

- Further develop and implement the "Program to Encourage Active and Rewarding Lives" (PEARLS) project which is an evidence-based program for older adults with depression.
- Strengthen the development of a Long Term Care Insurance Resource Center.
- Respond to the additional calls for information and assistance directed to our Insurance Resource Center resulting from federal health care reforms.
- To Maintain and expand the Retired Senior Volunteer Program's (RSVP) "University Express Life Long Learning Program" that provides high quality educational opportunities for personal growth and enrichment in addition to civic engagement.
- Continue to work with the Administration on Aging's Performance Outcome Measures Project (POMP) the focus of which will be on analyzing client data and identifying "predictor variables" that allows the aging network to target home and community-based services most effectively.
- In cooperation with other partners and stakeholders, plan and implement an Elder Law Day that provides objective, information about various legal topics that assist older adults with current and future planning.
- Promote safe mobility for seniors by maintaining a leadership role on Erie County's Older Driver Family Assistance Help Network, supporting outreach to professional and community members, and providing on-going problem-solving assistance to eliminate barriers encountered by concerned caregivers.
- Collaborate with the New York State Office for the Aging and the American Cancer Society to pilot a facilitated enrollment in a preventive health screening reminder program for seniors.
- Collaborate with the Community Health Foundation and key stakeholders of the community toward the development of a major, community-wide falls prevention initiative that builds upon the lessons from earlier projects.
- Maintain a leadership role with the "Safety Awareness for the Elderly" (S.A.F.E.) outreach and education program about elder abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, and crime prevention. The Department will engage in collaborative efforts designed to educate professionals from various disciplines and will develop and implement policies, protocols, and procedures that serve victims of elder abuse.
- Expand upon the health, wellness, and fitness components of the Stay Fit Dining Congregate Nutrition Program, including seeking assistance from local universities to evaluate the effectiveness of the exercise component of the dining program.

- Spearhead a comprehensive health outreach and education project in cooperation with the US Department of Agriculture, WNY Food Bank, Erie County Cooperative Extension, Meals on Wheels for WNY, Inc., Southtown Meals on Wheels, and the Farmers Market Coalition.
- Expand the successful “Powerful Tools for Caregivers” classes that help caregivers cope with the challenges associated with the care of their loved ones and increase the level of participation of minority caregivers in this program.

D. Collaboration with Community Stakeholders

Goal

Senior Services will seek to maintain ongoing cooperative efforts with organizations from public and private sectors in an effort to maximize to the extent possible, all available resources.

The follow is a partial list of the organizations with whom these collaborative working relationships exist:

- Center for Transportation Excellence
- P2 Collaborative
- Rural Transit Service, Inc.
- United Way of Buffalo and Erie County
- Community Health Foundation of WNY
- Network in Aging of WNY
- Erie County Caregiver Coalition
- New York State Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- WNY Regional Caregiver Resource Center Group
- New York State Assoc. of Nutrition and Aging Service Providers
- NYS Meals on Wheels Association
- Buffalo State College School of Social Work
- SUNY Buffalo School of Social Work
- Erie County Council on the Disabled
- Erie-Niagara Tobacco Free Coalition
- Coalition for Advance Healthcare Decision Making
- WNY Adult Immunization Coalition
- The Cancer Services Program of Erie County
- New York State Coalition on Adult Abuse, the Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence
- The Financial Crimes Task Force
- Council on Elder Abuse
- Health Literacy Collaborative
- Workforce Investment Board

- American Diabetes Association
- Healthy Living Task Force
- Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council
- All of the community agencies with whom we contract to provide services to older adults and caregivers

E. SERVICE OBJECTIVES

Goal

To enable seniors to remain in their homes with a high quality of life for as long as possible through the provision of home and community-based services including supports for family caregivers

In line with the above considerations, the Department of Senior Services will maintain current programs, making modifications as needed to reflect the changing needs of the consumer. These services include:

1. Access Services

To evaluate and improve methods of providing information and assistance to persons 60+ and their families, and to offer information to the general community on needs of and services to the elderly.

To continue outreach activities to link older persons to community services, benefits, and entitlements.

To facilitate and assist in the development of a county-wide transportation and mobility management system designed to assist older adults who are unable to utilize conventional means of transportation to access health, nutrition, and income maintenance services.

To maintain a county-wide system of case management services for the elderly that operates with the cooperation of community-based agencies.

2. In-Home Services

To maintain the level of in-home services available to functionally impaired older persons, including homemaker/personal care and housekeeper services.

To continue to provide, under contract with community agencies, chore maintenance, and telephone assurance services.

To continue to provide home-delivered meal services for frail and handicapped persons unable to prepare adequate nutritious meals on their own in cooperation with Meals on Wheels of WNY, Inc. and the Southtowns Meals on Wheels programs.

To expand the distribution of personal emergency response services (PERS) that promotes the safety and security of frail and vulnerable elders.

3. Congregate Services

To provide hot noonday meals to the elderly at 46 dining sites throughout the county and continue to expand service to underserved rural and urban seniors.

To provide nutrition education and healthy meal preparation demonstrations to older adults.

To continue support for social adult day care providing care for frail and impaired elders in a supervised setting while also serving as a respite program for their care givers.

4. Legal Services

To continue to provide legal advice and representation to older persons, as well as to grandparents and relatives age 60 and over who serve as primary caregivers of minor children through a contract with Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled or Disadvantaged of WNY.

5. Other Programs and Services

To maintain the provision of Protective Services for Older Adults, including case management, financial management, guardianship, and in-home services to older persons at particular risk of abuse, neglect and financial exploitation.

To implement the Farmer's Market Coupon initiative providing low and moderate income seniors with fresh fruits and vegetables during the summer months.

To continue support of faith-based, grass roots initiatives provided by Hearts and Hands: Faith in Action that are designed to recruit volunteers that will provide direct assistance such as transportation, friendly visiting, and minor repairs to at risk seniors.

To continue operation of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, contributing thousands of hours of volunteer services to community organizations and to increase the number of volunteers in "high impact" sites such as child literacy and community revitalization.

To expand employment opportunities for older adults through the coordination of resources available to Supportive Services Corporation(SSC) and the Senior Jobs, Senior Aides, and Senior Community Service Employment Programs, as well as the Workforce Investment Board.

To assist older adults to meet their basic housing needs and work in cooperation with Catholic Charities of Buffalo to coordinate the services provided by the Housing and Supportive Services Program with existing case management services.

To maintain, in conjunction with the Elizabeth Pierce-Olmsted, MD Center for the Visually Impaired (formerly the Blind Association of WNY) Senior Vision Services, providing assessment, counseling, and aid to elderly with vision impairments.

To support the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program operated by the American Red Cross assisting older persons in nursing homes to resolve problems.

To continue the Department's Wise and Well Program's efforts to build seniors' self-care skills in the following areas: medication safety and documentation, maintaining a personal health record, personal emergency preparedness, advance health care planning, and preventive health screenings.

To provide information to older adults and their caregivers on matters pertaining to health promotion and disease prevention and coordinate these efforts with other community-wide efforts such as the "Be Active" Wellness Walks, Tobacco-Free Coalition, the Coalition for Health Care Decision Making, and the Living Healthy Partnership.

The Department's Caregiver Resource Center (CRC) will continue to promote the "Alzheimer's Proofing Your Home" project that provides a free, confidential in-home, customized assessment for caregivers of memory impaired individuals and suggestions for home modification and personal safety. This will include updating and improving information dissemination to the public and service providers via its enhanced websites at

www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices/, the Caregiver Coalition's website at www.eriecountycaregiver.org and the Erie County NY Connects website at www.erie.gov/nyconnects.

Written comments regarding the plans for services to older adults contained in this Abstract will be accepted until November 13, 2009. For further information, please contact Charles Battaglia at the Erie County Department of Senior Services, 95 Franklin Street, Room 1329, Buffalo, New York 14202-3968, (716)858-7253.

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